# A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Saturday, January 31. 1708.

IN purſuing the Subject of Prohibitions in Trade, I am diſtinguiſhing of the Neceſſary and the Injurious, and came in my laſt to a Diſcourſe of the Prohibition of *Eaſt-India* Goods; I anſwer'd the Objection raiſed from the Days of King *Charles* II. and King *James*, and ſhow'd you ſomething of the Encreaſe of the Trade upon us, *how it grew inſenſibly upon the Nation*; and whether it might have grown you all have ſeen, tho' by Way of *Errata*, I muſt correct one Thing in my Calculations, *Viz.* Of 57 Ships in 11 Months, and I do it here to let you ſee I am as careful as I can, to let nothing ſlip that ſhould ſeem to impoſe upon you, or by a Miſtake to enlarge the Proportions which our Cauſe has no need of; and therefore I am to note, it ſhould have been printed 2 Year and 11 Months, but if any one reckons up what 57 Ships in that Time is, *to be ſent to the Indies*, they will find no Room for an Error of the Preſs to cavil at the Proportions.

Farther to make out my Simily between a Fever and a Plague, I come now to examine into the real Decay of our Manufactures, and the Damage we ſuffer'd under the Encroachment this made on our Trade—And then I ſhall give a moſt unanſwerable Proof, that this, and this only, was the Cauſe of that Decay, and that it was viſibly going on to the entire ſupplanting the very Name of a Manufacture out of ſome Parts of the Nation.

There were two Things which contributed chiefly to the Miſchief I am talking of, and which gave the *Eaſt-India* Trade ſuch an Advantage over our Manufactures; *One*

was

was the encreaſing the Stock of the Traders thither; by *firſt*, the Old Company calling 640000 *l.* into their Trade, the New Companies being erected upon us at the ſame Time, and both being encouraged by the Demand and the great Prices of their Goods. The *Second* was the general Fanſie of the People running upon *Eaſt-India* Goods to that Degree, that the Chints and painted Callicoes, which before were only made Uſe of for Carpets, Quilts, &c. and to cloth Children or ordinary People, became now the Dreſs of our Ladies, *and ſuch is the Power of a Mode*; we ſaw our Perſons of Quality dreſs'd in *Indian* Carpets, which but a few Years before their Chamber-Maids would have thought too ordinary for them; the Chints were advanc'd from lying on their Floors to their Backs, from the Foot-Cloth to the Petticoat, and even the QUEEN Her ſelf at that Time was pleaſed to appear in China and Japan, I mean China Silks and Callico.

Nor was this all, but it crept into our Houſes, our Cloſets, and Bed-Chambers, Curtains, Cuſhions, Chairs, and at laſt Beds themſelves were nothing but Callicoes or Indian Stuffs, and in ſhort almoſt every Thing that uſed to be made of Wool or Silk, relating either to the Dreſs of the Women, or the Furniture of our Houſes, was ſupply'd by the Indian Trade.

What remain'd then for our People to do, but to ſtand ſtill and look on, ſee the Bread taken out of their Mouths, and the *Eaſt-India* Trade carry away the whole Employment of their People? What had the Maſters to do but diſmiſs their Journey men, and take no more Apprentices? What had the Journey-men to do but to ſit ſtill, grow poor, run away and ſtarve; of which preſently by it ſelf.

While this general Guſt of the Nation run thus upon their own Ruin, it cannot be ſuppoſed, but the Companies, who generally have their Eyes open to their Intereſt, mutually agreed in this, *tho' they were at open War with one another in other Things*, that their Buſineſs was to *make Hay while this Sun ſhin'd*; and now it was they borrow'd Money on Bonds, doubled their Stocks, and inſtead of a few Ships, began to ſend whole Fleets every Year to the *Eaſt-Indies*—It would be needleſs to enter into the monſtrous Growth of the Trade in about 5 or 6 Years Time; let any Man but look into the Cargoes exported and imported in the Years 98, and 99, or between 1697, and 1699, and they will find the Account ſo ſurprizing, that a Man hardly dare put it in Print; it ſeems to carry with it ſomething incredible, or rather impoſſible, *viz.*

That from *December* 1697, to *January* 1699, was exported in Bullion only, beſides Goods, and by the Companies, beſide private Trade, ſeven Millions, one Hundred fifty ſeven Thouſand, three Hundred ſeventy two Ounces of *Plate*.

That the Cargo home of the fifty odd Ships, *which went out as above*, by general Calculations made by better Hands than mine, at that time, amounted to in the Hands of the Retailer above ſeven Millions *Sterling*.

That ſeveral ſingle Ships, ſuch as the *Martha*, the *Taveſtock*, and others, brought Home two Hundred Thouſand Pieces of Goods at a Time, directly interfering with our Home Manufactures, and beſides the Humour of the Times being on many Accounts to be ſold beyond all Proportion, cheaper than any thing could be made here.

Add to all this, that to encreaſe our Misfortunes at that Time, and to compleat the Deſtruction of our Manufactures, the Companies could not pretend, that this was in the leaſt a Return for any thing of our own Growth; had it been ſo, our People would ſtill have had ſome Employment, and the Export might have been ſomething of an Equivalent to ſatisfie the People—— But while not a Pennyworth of Goods went out for it, the whole Weight lay upon our People, and our Manufactures felt ſuch a general Decay, that he, who ſhall read the next of theſe Papers, may perhaps be ſomething ſurpriz'd at.

Let no Man wonder, the Parliament, as ſoon as they were made ſenſible of this, came readily into the Prohibition, nor let them doubt, that any future Parliament, while theſe Things may be made plain to them

them will ever come into a Repeal of it—Nay, I cannot think, that even the Members of the Companies themſelves, as *Engliſh* Men, as *Britains*, and take them abſtracted from their privare Intereſt as Members, can deſire it, they cannot but bluſh when they look back at the Havock they had made among us in Trade, and how the Gain, they made, was out of the Life-Blood of the Nation.

As to thoſe who preſum'd, that an Offer of Money to the Parliament would purchaſe them any thing, and then had this in their View, they ſhould have conſider'd two or three Things.

*Firſt*, Their ſcandalous Opinion of the Parliament deſerv'd ſome Reſentment, that they could imagine they would ſupply the publick Demands at ſuch a Price, or that they could be ignorant of the Conſequences.

*Secondly*, They ought to remember, that the Fund, they have enjoy'd ſo long, and the extravagant Intereſt of 8 *per Cent.* they have receiv'd, gives Room enough for the Government to demand the Money they are now to advance, without granting them any other Favour, than the adding to their Political Life a new Leaſe of 21 Years, and they ought to be very thankful for the Bounty; but of this hereafter.

I ſhall in my next lay before you a brief Account of the low Condition, this Encreaſe of the *Eaſt-India* Trade had brought our Manufactures to, and prove, that they were the ſingle Occaſion of it.

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# MISCELLANEA.

I Have ſometimes in this Paper taken the Liberty gently to touch at ſome Caſes, which ſome of our Men of the Univerſity of *Oxford* have been pleaſed to make in their Morals—— And who, no doubt, remember, that I have alſo done them Juſtice, when they have been pleaſed to reform ſome Abuſes, that ſtruck at their Reputation as well as Intereſt, I mean, as to the Affair of the *Play Houſe*.

I cannot but give a ſhort Hint here to theſe Gentlemen by Way of Advice, whether they will pleaſe to accept it or no, I know not—But I am ſure, it concerns them to examine the Matter of Fact, however they may contemn the Monitor.

In ſhort, I would humbly recommend to them to examine, whether it is not a Scandal to their Univerſity in general, and worth their Enquiry after Perſons in particular, if in a certain Publick-Houſe in their City, having King *William*'s laſt Speech to his Parliament hanging up in the open Room with his Majeſty's Picture over it, certain of the Gentlemen of ———, a College, ſome of whom perhaps are not ſo conceal'd as they imagine, much leſs their Behaviour, have thought fit to ſhow their Manners, as well as Principles, by offering to the Picture the vileſt of Indignities, ſtabbing it in ſeveral Places of the Face, cutting off its Noſe, *and the like*, Things they only wanted Courage, *not Villany to act upon Him when alive.*

Then I recommend to them to examine into certain Obliterations and Interpolations made in the Speech, and filled up with the moſt wretched, filthy, and worſe than beaſtly Expreſſions, which they would repreſent as from his Majeſty to the Parliament, ſuch as modeſt Ears would abhor to hear, and as I have not Share enough *of true Oxford* to write.

Then let them enquire, why the Maſter of the Houſe ſuffers this Spectacle to remain in his Houſe, who of his Gueſt it pleaſes, what Company it brings to his Houſe, who entertain themſelves with the Sight, and make Sport at the Fact——— And laſt of all, let them, IF THEY PLEASE, ſhow the World, whether they appprove of it or no—— If they do not think fit to notice it, I ſhall be ſorry for their own Sakes, and if they want farther Particulars, they ſhall have them at Demand.

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If they pleaſe to ſend up an Account of theſe things to Mr. *Rebearſal*; he is compleatly qualify'd to vindicate ſuch Proceedings as theſe, and perhaps will deny or evade the Fact for them, as he did of the Aff ir of *Taunton*.

It is very unfortunate, that theſe things ſhould come to Town juſt againſt the 30*th* of *January*, when the Doctrine of Male-treating of Princes is ſo particularly the Subject of the Party, both in the Pulpit and out of it.

It is not the firſt Aſſaſſination King *William* has ſuffer'd in Effigie, nor is it any thing leſs than we ought to expect from ſuch People; however, as to the Univerſity of *Oxford*, I'll prevent Mr. *Rebearſal* in this, that I ſhall not ſay it is a Charge on the whole——But I ſhall be more particularly obliged to vindicate them as a Body, when they have diſcover'd their Averſion to the abominable Fact, by examining the Particulars, and ſhowing their juſt Reſentment at the Perſons.

Such ought to be detected and puniſh'd for their Breach of good Manners, as well as the vile Ingratitude to the Memory of Him, by whoſe Endeavours, and at the Price of whoſe Hazards, the Proteſtant Religion, the Liberty of the Univerſity and of the whole Nation was reſtor'd.

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